

VZCZCXR05155
OO RUEHCHI RUEHDT RUEHHM RUEHNH RUEHTRO
DE RUEHGO #0803 3480952
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 140952Z DEC 09
FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9670
INFO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE
RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 2356
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 5850
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 9416
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 7035
RUEHCHI/AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI 2377
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2784
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEKJCS/Joint STAFF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L RANGOON 000803

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EAP/MLS, DRL, AND IO
PACOM FOR FPA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/13/2019
TAGS: PGOV PREL PHUM BM
SUBJECT: BURMA: AUTHORITIES PREVENT HUMAN RIGHTS DAY
CEREMONY

REF: RANGOON 629

Classified By: Political Officer Marc Shaw for Reasons 1.4 (b) & (d)

¶1. (C) Pyay city (Bago Division) Peace and Development Council officials (PDC) in Burma questioned Human Rights Defenders and Promoters (HRDP) leaders Maung Maung Lay and Min Min on December 9 in an effort to thwart HRDP efforts to hold an annual ceremony December 10 commemorating the 61st International Human Rights Day. Maung Maung Lay contacted us early December 10 to report that authorities had questioned him the previous evening shortly after he arrived in Pyay. According to Maung Maung Lay, authorities complained that the organization did not request advance permission to hold the event. (Note: In practice, Home Affairs Ministry officials at the local level insist on pre-approval of large organized gatherings.) According to Maung Maung Lay, police, in coordination with PDC officials, detained Min Min for approximately eight hours on December 10 and threatened to arrest him if he did not immediately cancel the planned ceremony. Local authorities told Maung Maung Lay, who was visiting from Rangoon, to depart Pyay immediately. HRDP members confirm they complied with the authorities' requests and did not hold the ceremony.

¶2. (C) HRDP was formed in 2002 to raise human rights awareness and advocate on behalf of the Burmese people. Its leader, Myint Aye, is currently in prison serving a 20-year sentence. He was arrested in August 2008 on charges of possessing explosive materials. Min Min (aka La Min Tun) was one of the estimated 7,114 prisoners released by the government in September 2009 (reftel).

DINGER